NOTE XXV.

HABITS OF THE SCALY ANTEATER FROM JAVA

BY

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Mr. Edward Jacobson from Semarang (Java), one of the zealed correspondents of our Museum, communicated me the other day some observations made by himself on living animals. Especially of a high scientific interest seemed to me what he wrote concerning the habits and behavior of a specimen of the Scaly Anteater, *Manis javanica*; among his observations is one quite unknown till now, namely that the animal when frightened, emits a *strong musk-smell.* As far as I am aware no hunter or traveler made the same observation before. Dr. Büttikofer, at present Director of the Rotterdam Zoological Garden, had in Liberia numbers of living specimens of *Manis tricuspis* and *M. longicaudata* under observation, he however never has perceived the named smell. As it is a very interesting fact, worthy to save from oblivion, I translate here Mr. Jacobson's letter partly.

He writes d.d. 16 December 1902: »On a boar-hunting »foregoing week one of my men had the good luck of »procuring a specimen of the Scaly-Anteater (*Manis java-* »*nica*) by digging it out from a hole. — How exceedingly »helpless these creatures are! That they since long not »have been extirpated by dogs or tigers they probably »owe to the *strong smell of musk* they emit. — I kept »the animal during three days in a »volière" close to my »house in order to study its habits. The Anteater if

»frightened rolls itself up into a ball like the hedgehog »does, I however am convinced that this would help it »not very much against the hungry »Gladakkers" (kam»pong-dogs), which would seize it very soon by the not »by scales protected parts of the body; it however seems »that the dogs dislike the *smell* emitted by such an animal, »for our hounds, pure »gladakkers", would have nothing »at all to do with it; meanwhile these very hounds, as »I personally saw, on former occasions devored in a few »minutes a porcupine (*landak*), notwithstanding the animal »had erected its spines from all sides of the body. It »seems to me that the senses of the Anteater stand on a »very low degree. If in the afternoon I allowed the animal »to take fresh air, it seemed not at all to be aware of »my presence. The sense of sight probably is very badly »developed, for continually it ran against different objects; »if I moved a stick closely before its eyes as if I would »strike it, the animal paid no attention whatever. It did »not observe different sounds made in its neighborhood, »as much as if I stamped upon the earth at a distance of »less than a meter. It seems that the sense of smell is »the less worst of all, as the animal moves on snuffling at »the earth and at all objects on the way; the latter sense »however cannot be very strongly developed as from the »following experiment may be concluded. I held my hand »or foot so that the animal could not escape from running »against it, and it remarked this merely at a distance of »less than a decimeter for not earlier it shrunk back, »snuffled in the air and changed course or put its head »between the fore-legs in order to roll itself up. I repeated »this experiment more than twenty times and always with »the same result. Apparently it made him most uneasy if »I pulled on one of the thick hairs sparingly protruding »from between the scales — it immediately rolled itself »up into a ball making a hissing noice, but without any »attempt for self-defence".....